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ABSTRACT

Whether bilingual-bicultural education will become a change agent and secure equal status with other programs as a desirable and essential aspect of the American educational process is still a question. Like all socio-political issues, its future depends upon the attitudes and beliefs of the populace. One of the current stumbling blocks for the acceptance and implementation of bilingual education is the question of ethnic group status. To provide a compromise between the nativists and the immigrants, current bilingual education is being developed and funded on the basis of the transitional model. Bilingual schooling is not a new phenomena in the United States; since the 1700's, various ethnic groups have established their own schools teaching English as a subject. However, during and after World War I, restrictive legislation and nationalistic and isolationist foreign policies led to the "English only" policy in schools. But by 1975, 383 classroom demonstration projects in 42 languages (23 in American Indian and Eskimo languages) existed and $68,000,000 in Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title VII funds were expended for bilingual education. Significant legislation and court decisions that provided a foundation for bilingual education were Meyer v. Nebraska (1923), Farrington v. Tokusnige (1927), ESEA Title VII, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), the Bilingual Education Act (1968), Lau v. Nichols (1974), and Serna v. Portales (1964). (NEC)

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PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES IN BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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by Earl J. Ogletree

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was enacted to meet the academic, social and economic needs of the increasing number of non-English and partial bilingual-speakers in the United States. It was recognized as far back as 1920, that the inability to understand the language of instruction was the chief cause of immigrant children's poor performance in school (Ide 1920). Current statistics are similar. The non-English-speaking child is one year behind by the third grade, two years by the seventh grade, and one of the fifty percent school dropout statistices by the twelfth grade (U.S. Office of Education 1975).

Today there are approximately five million children living in homes where a language other than English is spoken (U.S. Office of Education 1975). Of this group 1.8 to 2.5 million need special instruction in English.

Although the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII, ESEA) was initially promoted by Cuban immigrants relocating in Miami, Florida (U. S. has the fifth largest Spanish-speaking population in the world) it now includes speakers of German, French,

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Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Philippino (Tagalog) and several American Indian languages, to list a few. It was designed to help three to eighteen year old non-English-speakers to:

1. Achieve fluency and literacy in two languages (native and English).
2. Function effectively in the American and native cultures (bicultural component).
3. Progress in academic subjects at same rate as non-immigrant, English speaking children.
4. Develop a positive self-concept and pride in the dual linguistic and cultural heritages (Condon 1974).

An important component of the Act is to envolve the parents and community in the planning, implementation and evaluation of bilingual programs.

With the development of bilingual programs came a myraid of educational-linguistic concepts:

Bilingualism: The ability to function in two languages, but not necessarily with equal proficiency.

Biculturalism: The possibility to function in two cultures, as the occasion arises, but not necessarily with equal proficiency.

Bilingual Education: Instruction in two languages, enabling the person to function in another language in addition to his native language, with or without equal proficiency.

Bilingual/Bicultural Education: Instruction in and reinforcement of the native language and culture as well as the new or second language and culture.

Transitional Bilingual Program: The learning of English with no or little reinforcement of the native language, except as a starting point to help the student to make the transition from his native language to English as soon as possible. (This program is based on the "melting pot" concept of assimilation.)

Maintenance Bilingual Education: A self-sustaining, continuous program of developing the native language, while learning English with equal proficiency. (This program is based on the concept of cultural pluralism.)

According to Condon (1974), "in its ideal form, the overall purpose of bilingual-bicultural education is to produce bilingualism and biculturalism within the learners." However, idealistic programs are generally stifled by the time. Bilingual education is interpreted as a remedial compensatory model of education for minority groups not as a linguistic model in which all children would be bilingual. Instead, the Bilingual Act "functionally promotes the use of other languages only as means of learning English," which sacrificing the native idiom (Gonzales 1975). Federal and state statutes have favored transitional over maintenance bilingual programs. The confirmation of the melting pot rather than the pluralist philosophy of American society is reflected in the history of bilingual education.

This article will attempt to examine the historical evolution, legal basis and major issues of bilingual education

Historical Perspectives of Bilingual Schooling

Bilingual schooling is not a new phenomena in the United States. Founded by immigrants, the U. S. has been populated by people from virtually every country. The earlier immigrants (1600-1880) faced cultural and linguistic problems in developing and adjusting to the American culture. However, it was the later immigrants that faced the greatest opposition to their native culture and language and overt pressure to change and to assimilate (Dimmerstein and Reimers 1975).

The first immigrant groups (mainly protestant, Scotch-Irish, French, English, Welsh, Germans and Dutch) lost their distinct national heritages/and languages to become part of the common American culture. Although English is the native language of the U. S., originally it was only one of the languages, together with French, Spanish, Dutch and German, brought to the colonies by the settlers. These early groups started their own bilingual and native language schools as a solution to meeting their children's educational needs.

Bilingual schooling dates back to the 1700's, when German, French, Scandinavian and Dutch established their own school, teaching English as a subject. From 1839-1880, German, French and Spanish groups established native language schools in the West,

South and Southwest (Leibowitz 1971). "In New Mexico, the Spanish language had equal constitutional status with English and was in actual use as an official state language" (Chicago Board of Education 1974, p. 33). Even the Cherokees had a native and bilingual educational system that produced 90 percent literacy in its native language. It was reported "that Oklahoma Cherokees had a higher literacy level than the white populations of either Texas or Arkansas" (Leibowitz 1971, p. 78).

Between the mid 19th century and World War I, increasing numbers of Catholic, Jewish, Eastern Orthodox and Asian religious groups from Italy, Russia, Balkans and Asians immigrated (Kopan 1974). Unlike the earlier immigrants, they were largely illiterate.

Being ethnically and racially different and poor they posed a potential threat to the American nativists. They were the "socially or culturally disadvantaged" of their time. They were looked on as inferior and blamed for the crime and slums of the cities. Coming from undemocratic countries, they were also suspected of being political radicals, enemies of the American system. They were social outcasts, and subsequently experienced hostility and blatant discrimination. Anti-ethnic organized formed to pressure the government to restrict further immigration of these new ethnic groups. Immigration laws were passed restricting Asian and Southern European immigration, while giving preference to Northern and Western European immigrants (Hartman 1974).

Both the old and new immigrant groups together with the larger society attempted to "melt the overwhelming number of immigrants into American society by teaching them English" (Hartman 1974, p. 20). Although it was estimated, that over one million children attended some form of bilingual schooling, the great majority of children who were in school received no special consideration, despite their difficulty in learning English (Cubberley 1934).

During and after World War I, restrictive legislation and nationalistic and isolationist foreign policies lead to the "English only" policy in schools and institutions. Dimmerstein and Reimers (1975) outline reasons for and implications of the decline in foreign languages in the United States between the two wars:

1. The pressure to assimilate into American life and become "truly American."
2. The emphasis on knowing English for successful competition for jobs.
3. The decline of foreign language newspapers.
4. The declining use of foreign languages as the children learned English.
5. The nationalistic zeal that accompanied World War I and World War II.
6. The curtailment of immigration.

7. The enactment of state laws declaring that English was to be the only means of instruction in the schools.
8. The development of mass media in the English language.
9. The use of foreign languages was limited to the instruction of that language (p. 124).

Many states passed laws that restricted the use of other languages for school instruction except in a foreign language class.

During World War II, the U. S. armed forces saw a need to teach foreign cultures and languages to servicemen. Bilingual-bicultural courses were implemented. After the War, interest in foreign languages diminished. It was not revived until the passage of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. Gonzales (1975) believes this act not only legitimized the active study of foreign languages, but it was also responsible for "providing financial assistance to many minority group students to attend college and specialize in math, science and foreign language." It also gave impetus to the "development of language education as a specialized teaching field" (p. 8).

Until the 1960's, few public schools had bilingual programs. Twenty-five states, even those with large non-speaking populations, had "English only" laws regarding classroom instruction. In seven states it was a violation of the criminal code and could mean the loss of certification to teach in a foreign language (Chicago Board of Education 1974).

Contemporary Bilingual education in the public schools began with the Coral Way School (Miami, Florida) bilingual program, funded by private and public foundations. The Cuban refugees persuaded the Dade County, Florida schools to launch this model bilingual program, which soon became the unofficial demonstration model school for the nation (Cordasco 1969).

The Coral Way experiment made clear that bilingual education was possible. Soon leaders from Latin American communities across the country, especially in the Southwest, pressed for bilingual programs for their children.

In 1964, two programs were established in Texas, one in the Nye School of the United Consolidated Independent School District in Webb County, outside of Laredo, and the other in the San Antonio Independent School District. In 1965, bilingual programs were established in Pecos, New Mexico and Edinburg, Texas. In 1966, the Harlandale Independent School District of San Antonio, Del Rio, and Zapata, Texas, in Calexico and Marysville, California and Rough Rock, Arizona, bilingual programs were founded. By 1968 Las Cruces, New Mexico ; Hoboken New Jersey; Corpus Christi and Del Valle, Texas; and St. Croix in the Virgin Islands had programs. In 1967, the U. S. Senate Sub-Committee on Bilingual Education called for hearings and in 1969 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was amended and Title VII was added to the Act. During 1969-70, there were fifty-six bilingual

programs plus seventy-six projects that were funded under Title VII. Today there are 383 classroom demonstration projects in 42 languages (23 in American Indian and Eskimo languages), plus five material centers (U. S. Office of Education 1975).

Besides Title VII (ESEA) funding, U. S. Office of Education and H. E. W. supports a variety of bilingual programs under the Emergency School Aid, Title I ESEA, Teacher Corps, Follow Through, Adult Education, Indian Education, Right to Read and Education for the Handicapped among others. Sixty-eight million dollars were expended for bilingual programs under Title VII for the 1974-75 school year (U. S. Office of Education 1975).

Legal Basis of Bilingual Education

Judical decisions have recognized the lack of language proficiency can be the basis of discrimination. Bilingual instruction was the remedy. The following legislation and court decisions helped provide a foundation for bilingual education:

1. Meyer v. Nebraska (1923). The Supreme Court invalidated prohibitions against foreign language instruction in private schools.
2. Farrington v. Tokusnige (1927). The Hawaii territorial law regulated subjects taught, textbooks used, and the political beliefs of instructors and had a provision restricting foreign language instruction to one hour per day, six days per week, 38 weeks per year. The court invalidated the statute.

3. Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 gave financial assistance to local educational agencies for the development of bilingual curricula to familiarize immigrant students with their history and culture. The program was voluntary.

4. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in federally funded programs and related activities. Under these regulations, no school system administering a federally-funded program may employ criteria or methods of administration which effectively frustrate the program's goals for persons of any particular national origin. In 1970, HEW issued a memorandum applying this standard to the problem of providing equal educational opportunity for national-origin minority group children deficient in English Language skills.

5. The Bilingual Education Act (1968). Congress authorized appropriations recognizing:

   a. That there are large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability.

   b. That many of such children have a cultural heritage which differs from that of English-speaking persons.

   c. That a primary means by which a child learns is through the use of such child's language and cultural heritage.

d. That, therefore, large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability have educational needs which can be met by the use of bilingual educational methods and techniques.

e. That, in addition, children of limited English-speaking ability benefit through the fullest utilization of multiple language and cultural resources (Giffert, et. al. 1975).

6. Lau v. Nichols (1974). The U. S. Supreme Court determined that "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum, for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education." This case referred to Chinese-speaking children in the San Francisco school system who were not receiving equal education opportunities, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The school system was ordered to remedy the situation.

7. Serna v. Portales (1964). The court relied on the Lau decision and affirmed a lower court decision to order bilingual programs as a remedy in a Title VI case. It was found that Spanish-speaking children in a New Mexico school district had not received equal educational opportunity and this had violated their constitutional right to equal protection.

The Lau decision facilitated the amendment of Title VII (Public Law 93-380). In addition to helping LEA's to serve non-English speaking children better, it also broadened the program to include more deliberate and systematic teacher training and curriculum development (U. S. Office of Education 1975). It is predicted that the supreme court ruling in the Lau v. Nichols decision that public schools must provide special language instruction for non-English speakers will lead to a proliferation of bilingual programs in the 1970's and 1980's.

Accompanying these changes at the federal level, was the amendment of state statutes which expressly or implicitly permit instruction in a language other than English. Fourteen states have no statutory provisions. Two states (Alaska and Penn) describe only the circumstances under which non-English instruction in substantive courses is permitted. Five states have an "English-only" policy for the public schools, whereas seven states have an "English-only statute for both public and private schools (Giffert, et. al. 1975).

Grubb (1974) reasons there will be additional changes in local statutes in that failure to provide bilingual instruction where it is needed constitutes a violation of the constitutional provision for equal protection and due process. When considered in the context of compulsory education laws, this argument carries much weight. "If a state is interested in educating its population, it may justify compelling the children to attend school. But when suitable educational instruction is not provided, compulsory schooling is reduced to confinement" (p. 241).

With the changes in federal laws and legislation and state statutes, a number of states have passed laws mandating the establishment of bilingual education. In 1972, Massachusetts was the first state to pass a mandatory bilingual education law, requiring bilingual programs in any school district with twenty or more students of the same language background. Illinois passed a similar law in 1973, followed in 1974 by California, New Jersey, New Mexico, Texas and Alaska. Other states followed with administrative directives for the establishment of bilingual programs (Gonzales 1975).

However, all of the state legislation to date has been directed toward transitional rather and maintenance bilingual education. Bilingual education is the stepping-stone to learning English, rather than the foundation for the national program. Its educational and fiscal status confirms it standing in the American schools. In most states, bilingual programs are adjuncts to the regular curriculum, only limited English speaking children are eligible for bilingual instruction and their existence is based on the availability of federal and state "soft monies."

Issues in Bilingual Education

The proponents of bilingual education view it as a vehicle for cultural pluralism. They argue that bilingual education:

1. Gives the non-English-speaking child the opportunity to learn his own language and culture, and it influence self-concept and intellectual development during the formative years.

2. Approaches the child as advantaged rather than disadvantaged.
3. Helps to maintain the linguistic and cultural heritage of the ethnic group.
4. Is a legal right because it provides reasonable opportunity for academic success for non-English-speakers.
5. Should be a regular course of study, teaching two languages to all children.
6. Fosters educational change by challenging the assumption that an English based curriculum is suitable for all children.

Bilingual education supporters attempt to dispell some of the myths by claiming that: 1) It is not an expression of minority militancy, but a recognition of cultural pluralism; 2) It is not a compensatory or remedial English or reading program; 3) It is not based on the concept of ethnic segregation; 4) It is not specifically designed for the Spanish-speaking only; 5) It is not a watered-down or dumping ground program for the outcast non-English and partial bilingual speakers; and 6) It is not an unAmerican educational activity (Condon 1974).

Despite their altruistic motivations and forceful arguments, bilingual education has not, as yet, been accorded equal status with other programs. Opponents provide an equally compelling case against bilingual education. Their arguments are based on historical and social precedents and economic factors. They reason that:

1. Every child must learn English to adequately function in American society.
2. The maintenance of an ethnic cultural and language is the responsibility of the home, not school and tax payer.
3. Past generations of non-English children learned English without the benefit of special, public funded bilingual programs.
4. If an ethnic group or individual decides to reside in the U. S., they should take the responsibility upon themselves to learn English.
5. Special consideration are given to certain ethnic and racial groups over others in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
6. Bilingual education fosters a form of ethnic and racial segregation, counter to current trends of school and community integration (Condon 1974).
7. U. S. is a melting pot of citizens, not ethnic groups. No ethnic group is forced to give up its "character and distinctiveness as a price for participation in American society and polity" (Glazer 1975, p.5).

Although the proponents of bilingual education may reject the latter statement by countering with the ethno-centricism or racism charge, others (Glazer 1975) would argue that the United States is a union of states, a "nation of free individuals, not a nation of politically defined ethnic groups" (p. 5). Glazer qualifies

his position by making a differentiation between ethnicity and citizenry.

> The ethnic group is the one of the building blocks of American society, politics, and economy, none of which can be fully understood without reference to ethnic group formation and maintenance, but this type of group is not given any political recognition or formal status. No one is enrolled in an ethnic group, except American Indians, for whom we still maintain a formally distinct political status defined by birth. For public purposes, everyone else is only a citizen. No one may be denied the right to political participation, education, jobs because of ethnic status nor (given better access to socio-economic institutions) (p. 28).

It follows that no ethnic groups have been or should be allowed to establish an independent polity, since they possess no political status. Only the individual, the citizen has political status.

It is this question of ethnic group status that is the stumbling block for the acceptance and implementation of bilingual education and its goals.

Bilingual education seems to be moving against the currents of social trends. One of course, is the "melting pot" concept. The other is the incompatibility between the principles of bilingual education and integration. For bilingual education to function effectively: 1) children of like language and cultural background

must attend the same school, 2) the community and neighborhood school concept must be maintained, 3) teachers of similar cultural and language background must be assigned to schools with like pupil populations, and 4) parents are mandated to be involved in the development of bilingual programs.

Segregation rather than integration is by necessity an essential ingredient of bilingual education. An example of the desire for ethnic segregation was demonstrated by the refusal of a group of Chicago Latin parents to send their children out of the Latin community to a black high school. Another was illustrated in a recent survey of Chicago teachers' opinions of proposed teacher and pupil integration plans. It showed that 62 to 85 percent of Latin teachers rejected all four plans (Ogletree 1976).

Therefore, the issue of bilingual education centers on whether or not it is compatible with the political, social and educational philosophy of the American society. Many believe the transitional programs provide a compromise between the nativists and the immigrants. Maintenance programs are too divergent with current merican thought and political action.

Current Trends

Bilingual education is being developed and funded on the basis of the transitional model. It is predicted that the Education Amendment of 1974 (Public Law 93-380), which amends

Title VII of ESEA, will facilitate serve to non-English speaking students. Under the Vocational Education Act training programs are being established to train or retrain limited English speaking persons, ages 16 and over.

As the number of bilingual programs swell to include over 200,000 children in 1976, it is estimated that between 48,000 and 77,000 teachers are needed. For the fiscal year 1976, the funding for bilingual education includes:

1. Inservice training of 9,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, administrators and counselors.
2. Undergraduate and graduate training fellowship for over 1,300 bilingual teachers and professors.
3. Assistance for over 20 colleges and universities to expand and develop bilingual education programs.
4. Expansion of six resource centers to assist teachers, develop curriculum materials.
5. Surveys to assess the specific local and national needs of bilingual education programs (U. S. Office of Education 1975).

Looking to the Future

Bilingual education is still in the developmental stage. It has not achieved its full potential. One reason is that like any new innovation, its expectations are unrealistically high, its implementation poorly planned and its evaluation has been an

after thought. Evaluation evidence has not kept pace with the growth of bilingual programs (Zirkel 1976); the state of the art of bilingual education and evaluation is still limited (Engle 1975).

Whether bilingual-bicultural education will become a change agent and secure equal status with other programs, as a desirable and essential aspect of the American educational process is still a question. Like all socio-political issues, its future depends upon the attitudes and beliefs of the populace. Failure to nurture it, may doom thousands of non-English speaking children to academic failure.

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